



The Securitisation of Climate Change – Actors, Processes, Consequences

DFG founded research project

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Introduction

Widening security

The project is situated within the larger debate about the concept of international security (see Buzan and Hansen 2009 for a summary). Those advocating the notion of environmental security belong to the so-called “wideners” within Security Studies, argued that a narrow conception of security that focused on the state as the referent object of security as well as on military means may well jeopardise the security of individuals or at the very least ignore a vast array of existential threats besides military ones (e.g. Booth 1991, 2007). On the political level, this has led to the concept of human security, as developed in the UN Human Development Reports in the 1990s (UNDP 1993, 1994; Paris 2001). From this perspective, climate change ought to be seen as a security issue because its effects may threaten the lives of individuals, communities or indeed humanity as a whole as much as, or even more than military threats.

Securitisation

Within the debate about widening the meaning of the concept of security, the Copenhagen School has become popular for taking a middle-ground position. On the one hand, it agrees with the wideners that a narrow conception of security is inadequate. On the other hand, however, it is wary of losing the analytical purchase of the concept of security if it can ultimately be applied to all aspects of politics and therefore is in danger of becoming synonymous with politics (Buzan et al. 1998: 4). Furthermore, authors writing in this tradition consider the representation of something as a security issue as normatively problematic. Primarily, they do so because they argue that such a representation, if successful, changes the normal rules of the political debate and may result in “emergency measures” which would not be seen as legitimate under normal circumstances (Wæver 1995, Buzan et al. 1998: 24). Others have added the problem that such a representation may lead to an infiltration of a variety of political sectors by the military, which can claim to act with authority in matters related to security (Huysmans 1998). In relation to climate change, there is therefore a danger of increasing the level of military violence through the representation of climate change as a security issue (Brzoska 2009).

Wæver (1995) has coined the term “securitisation” for the representation of an issue as an existential threat to a referent object that legitimises extraordinary “emergency” measures. He utilises speech act theory to argue that we cannot define security in the abstract, but that security rather acquires its meaning in concrete contexts through speech acts that follow the core characteristics of what he defines as securitisation. Wæver and the Copenhagen School therefore offer a discursive and formal rather than a substantive definition of security. They distinguish between securitising moves as attempts to securitise, and securitisation as a situation in which these moves are widely accepted by the broader audience, i.e. society (Buzan et al. 1998: 25-26). This has led to a broad debate in the literature about the success conditions for securitisation, the definition of who counts as an audience, and the ontological status of the referent object of securitisation (Stritzel 2007, Bazacq 2005, Léonard and Kaunert 2011). These debates are relevant when considering the different ways in which climate change is being securitised. One problem that we will particularly focus on is the question of whether securitising moves have to be “negative” in the sense of constraining the normal political debate (see Hajer 1995: 11 on this issue in environmental discourses), or whether they can lead more positively to the politicisation of an issue such as climate

change, and therefore in fact open up the political debate (for a discussion of these issues in relation to HIV/AIDS, see Elbe 2005, 2006; McInnes and Rushton 2010).

There is a second way of conceptualising securitisation, which has been put forward by Didier Bigo and the so-called “Paris School”. In contrast to Wæver and his colleagues, these authors do not focus on political discourse in a narrow sense of the term but on the broader technical and administrative processes that may also lead to the securitisation of an issue. Conceived in such a way, securitisation does not result from speech acts, and even less so from public articulations, but is instead a consequence of technological developments, bureaucratic procedures and expert advice (Bigo 2000, 2002). To date, empirical studies from this point of view have largely focused on the issue of migration (Huysmans 2000), but the technical and diffuse nature of climate change makes it likely that such processes of “technocratic” securitisation can also be found here. However, for our purposes we will stick to the Copenhagen School version of securitisation, as we are specifically interested in the links between climate change and security that are made publicly. To the extent that technology and administrative processes play a role, they interest us in terms of their impact on the feasibility of the proposed measures to counter a threat, rather than as securitising moves in and of themselves.

Securitisation and the environment

According to the Copenhagen School, political debates about the environment are characterised by three aspects: (1) the existence of two agendas, a scientific and a political one; (2) a multiplicity of securitising actors; (3), the ‘extent to which scientific argument structures environmental security debates’ (Buzan et al. 1998: 72). Perhaps surprisingly, Buzan et al. (1998: 73, 91/2) do not think that the environment has been successfully securitised, at least not on a global level, because the attempts to evoke the logic of security in the environmental sector have not exceeded the realm of ordinary politics. Yet this view is contested, and it raises the problem that we have indicated above regarding the relationship between securitisation and politicisation.

Trombetta (2011), for instance, argues that securitising moves in the environmental sector were successful insofar as they resulted in policies that would have otherwise not been realised, characterising this development as “proper” instead of failed securitisation (2008: 598). She claims that the Copenhagen School was unable to capture this securitisation because of a narrow and rather traditionalist view of what may count as extraordinary measures, anchored in the military sector. In a similar vein, Rita Floyd’s (2007, 2010) case studies show that not all securitising moves have invoked a confrontational logic, but that some have led to quick and effective solutions in a political process. Hence, she argues, securitising moves are a priori neither positive nor negative and must be judged on the basis of their results. These studies reinforce the need for a more careful conceptualisation of the relationship between politicisation and securitisation. In addition, they indicate that the concept of “extraordinary measures” may be underspecified in the sense that their qualification as “extraordinary” may depend on their content, the processes through which they are agreed, and the extent to which such moves had not been seen as legitimate previously (as for instance in the case of personal data records after 9/11) or not been thinkable at all (as it has arguably been the case in climate change).

All in all, it seems to us that, in contrast to Buzan et al., there is agreement in the literature that there have been attempts to securitise the environment, but that they come in the form of several

competing securitisation moves. In this, we follow Maarten Hajer's seminal work on environmental discourse, in which he observes that environmental problems are defined very differently by different actors, and that this has tremendous policy implications (Hajer 1995), as well as Karen Litfin's work on the Ozone regime, which – counter-intuitively – also shows competing conceptualisations of the problem at hand (Litfin 1994). With regard to climate change, these competing securitising moves have so far led to politicisation in the sense of placing the environment firmly on the global (as well as national) political agenda rather than to securitisation in the sense of imposing uncontested emergency measures that would have otherwise not seemed legitimate (Trombetta 2011: 140-1), although within particular subfields and specific national contexts, the latter may have also occurred.

Environmental degradation, climate change and conflict

Climate change will degrade the natural resource basis and thus increase environmental stress (IPCC 2007). Some changes such as extreme weather events directly affect human lives whereas others are taken to gradually undermine the well being of individuals and the stability of societies in the form of disputes over water, food scarcities and environmental migration. Global warming affects regions differently. Northern Africa, the Mediterranean, Southern Asia, Central and Latin America and the Middle East are identified as potential hot spots of climate-induced conflict where fragile governance structures, weak socio-economic development and environmental degradation could go hand in hand (Scheffran and Battaglini 2011).

The study of the environment conflict-nexus was initially shaped by Homer-Dixon's (1994, 1999) study on the interdependence between environmental change and conflict. He found substantial evidence that environmental scarcity can cause violent conflicts. Similarly, the UN High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change suggested that environmental degradation and violent conflict reinforce each other (HLP 2004).

An expert advisory group by the UNEP on environment, conflict and peacebuilding concluded that the possibility for conflicts over natural resources to exacerbate in the next decades is rather high (UNEP 2009: 5). Despite its significance Homer-Dixon's findings are subject to a number of criticisms. The case studies allegedly suffer from a selection bias due to a choice of cases with pre-existing violence (Matthew 2002: 209, Gleditsch 1998: 391/2), lack an adequate control group and avoid cases of cooperative solutions (Reuveny 2007: 668). In contrast to Homer-Dixon, Le Billion (2001) argues that the abundance of natural resources rather than their scarcity is positively related to the onset of violent conflict.

In relation to climate change, Scheffran and Battaglini (2011: 37) emphasise that the causal chain from global warming to violent conflicts is not fully understood thus far and Barnett (2000) adds that the argument of an environmental degradation-conflict is rather theoretically driven than empirically observable. A number of scholars see no clear evidence for the environment conflict-hypothesis (Barnett and Adger 2007, Nordås and Gleditsch 2007, Raleigh and Urdal 2007). They argue that environmental change may be one factor among others (see also Podesta and Ogden 2007-2008: 129, Hauge and Ellingsen 2001) and rather intervenes in already fragile societies as a threat multiplier (Elliot 1996: 159). The Conflict Barometer developed by the

Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research found that in 2008, resource scarcity played an important role in 71 out of 345 conflicts (HIK 2008). However, these are often characterised by a

complex situation, where environmental factors are combined with territorial, secessionist and ethnic grievances. Moreover, resource degradation can also provide an opportunity for cooperative behaviour (see Link et al. 2010 for the case of the Nile water management). On a global scale, climate change is also discussed as a factor possibly uniting the international community because of the need to adopt a coordinated global climate policy (Scheffran 2009: 29).

These studies indicate that the connection between environmental degradation, climate change and conflict is not a given, but subject to social and political processes. Among these, we would argue, securitising practices take on a core role.

Securitisation and climate change

The link between climate change and conflict is not confined to the academic literature, but is also reflected in the political debate. United Nations Secretary-General Ban-Ki Moon underlined that global warming is likely to “become a major driver for war and conflict” (UN News Centre 2007). On 17 April 2007 the UN Security Council held its first ever session on climate change. The United Kingdom had initiated the debate to discuss the security implications of global warming, suggesting in a background paper that climate change has the potential to threaten international peace and security by exacerbating border disputes, resource shortages, migration and humanitarian crisis (UN Security Council 2007a). During the debate, Margaret Beckett, the then British Foreign Secretary, suggested that global warming influences the states’ collective security (UN Security Council 2007b). This characterisation of climate change at the international level has not remained unchallenged. Not global warming itself, but the “economic model which drives growth, and the profligate consumption in rich nations that goes with it” is identified as the true threat by the United National Development Program in the 2007/2008 report *Fighting Climate Change* (UNDP 2007/2008: 15).

There were also attempts to securitise climate change on the regional and national level. In the US, a study by an influential group of retired US generals entitled *National Security and the Threat of Climate Change* (CAN 2007) was inter alia referred to possibility that extremists could exploit unstable conditions created by climate change. Two US Governments reports point into the same direction, suggesting “while climate change alone does not cause conflict, it may act as an accelerant of instability or conflict, placing a burden to respond on civilian institutions and militaries around the world” (US Government 2010a, cp. also US Government 2010b). The European Commission describes climate change more cautiously as a threat multiplier (European Commission 2008).

Think tanks and NGOs are important actors in this debate. A study by International Alert published in 2007 (Smith and Vivekanada 2007) compiles a list of 46 countries that face a high risk of violent conflict as a consequence of climate change. However, the study does not provide convincing evidence for the figures cited – a weakness it shares with a study by the Global Humanitarian Forum (2009) claiming that climate change is already killing 300,000 people annually. Moreover, advisory bodies installed by governments also shaped the debate on climate change. Another important study was *An Abrupt Climate Change Scenario and Its Implications for United States National Security* (Schwartz and Randall 2003), which assesses the implications of a climate-induced collapse of the Gulf Stream. The *Stern Review* (2006), which focuses on the economic consequences on climate change but also considers its security implications in that context, and the report on *Climate Change as a Security Risk* by the German Advisory Council on Global Change (Wissenschaftlicher Beirat Globale Umweltfragen, WBGU) have been highly influential reports.

The possible link between global warming and conflicts has renewed the interest in the environmental security debate. Nevertheless, a systematic account of these diverse securitising moves is missing. Trombetta (2008) considers the emerging discourse on climate security as an example of how the securitisation of non-traditional sectors may transform security practices. Brauch (2008) notes that climate change has increasingly been regarded as an urgent political issue and has gradually been securitised in the 21st century. He distinguishes between human, national and international security concerns discussed in relation to climate change but merely illustrates these with examples (Brauch 2002). Scott (2008) focuses on the legal

implication of securitising climate change but does not specifically address security issues in that context. Herbeck and Flitner (2010) provide a short review on the discussion on potential security implications without engaging in a systematic analysis of different actors and discursive frames.

Open problems and questions

Our review of the relevant literature shows that there clearly have been moves to securitise climate change. Yet these moves seem not to have led to an ideal typical securitisation as outlined by Buzan et al. (1998), in which clear and identifiable extraordinary measures are pushed through the political debate on the back of an emergency situation. Instead, they seem to have firmly established climate change on the political agenda and suggested a link between climate change and conflict. Yet the nature of this link remains as much contested as the measures to be taken to tackle climate change so that some of the defining characteristics of securitisation are not present. This raises a series of questions both theoretically regarding the link between politicisation and securitisation as well as empirically regarding the actors, processes and consequences of securitising climate change, some of which the literature has touched upon, but where at present there is a lack of thorough analysis. In particular, we see the following gaps and problems:

1. How exactly can we identify different forms of securitising climate change? Detraz and Betsill (2009) mention the existence of environmental security and an environmental conflict discourse and analyse whether a discursive shift has occurred from the former to the latter. However, their analysis is limited to the 2007 Security Council debate.

2. Who are the actors articulating a specific form of securitising climate change, and why do they pursue one way of linking climate change and security rather than another? Brzoska (2009) has identified this problem but only provides an illustrative analysis of four policy documents, and does not raise the “why” question. Schäfer et al. (2011) focus on media representation of climate change by scientists, entrepreneurs and other actors and the reception by media users, but do not analyse the political process, nor do they explicitly address the representation of a possible climate change-conflict nexus. Floyd brings up the question of why actors securitise - for which, she argues, the Copenhagen School offers no explanation (2010: 2) - but does not consider the existence of different frames linking climate change and conflicts in that context.

3. How and under what conditions do these different representations translate into policies? With reference to Doty's (1998/99) work on migration, McDonald (2008) poses the question of how some particular articulations of security became predominant, through which processes certain actors were empowered to ‘speak’ security and to what extent alternative framings of security were marginalised or silenced. Climate change provides a case to exploit this aspect that is only partially

addressed within the Copenhagen School's framework. In line with our proposal, Wilkinson (2007) demands a stronger focus on the processes rather than the outcome of securitisation.

4. What does the case of climate change tell us about the role that securitisation plays in politicisation? Trombetta (2011: 145) has argued in the case of the ozone regime that the politicisation of the issue occurred through securitisation, but a systematic account of the possibility of such a process in climate change policies is lacking.

Objectives

The gaps and problems that we have identified in the literature inform the objectives of our proposed study. These are as follows:

Framing the climate change-conflict nexus: actors and discourses

Objective 1a: To identify the different ways of linking security and climate change.

Objective 1b: To determine which actors, with a specific focus on non-state actors, articulate which linkage between security and climate change in order to alter the political debate.

Reasons for different securitisations

Objective 2a: To establish why actors pursue a particular linkage between security and climate change.

Objective 2b: To assess whether there is a correlation between particular securitisations of climate change and specific policy recommendations.

Consequences for concrete policies

Objective 3a: To see which securitisations are taken up by political actors and find their way into concrete policies.

Objective 3b: To establish why specific securitisations have been taken up by political actors rather than others.

Impact on theoretical framework

Objective 4: To develop a consistent theoretical framework that clarifies the relationship between politicisation and securitisation, and to relate it to the case of the securitisation of climate change.

Theoretical framework

Securitisation as framing

While the Copenhagen School describes the process of securitisation as a speech act, it could also be interpreted as framing. In his relatively unnoticed book *Threat Politics*, Eriksson (2001) poses the question of how an issue gains societal salience as a threat, which he explores using the concept of

framing. Developed in Sociology (Goffman 1974), frame analysis has been applied in communication and media studies (Entman 1993) as well as in social movement theory, predominantly to explain the emergence and actions of social movements in western industrialised states (Della Porta and Diani 2006). Framing is a process whereby an agent is developing a particular interpretive scheme (Benford and Snow 2000). Securitisation is one such scheme.

Framing has both overlap with agenda setting research and important distinctions (Scheufele and Tewksbury 2007, cp. McCombs and Ghanem 2008 on the convergence of both strands of research). In particular second-level agenda setting, which focuses on the characteristics or attributes of issues rather than its salience per se, shares many similarities with framing (Weaver 2007), and is based on similar processes (Scheufele 2007) albeit this view is contested (Takeshita 2006). We assume that agenda setting can be one but not the only possible effect of a successful framing of the climate change security nexus as illustrated below.

We distinguish between the narrower concept of frames and the wider idea of images. A single image can be framed in different ways, as shown by Carragee and Roefs (2004: 26) in their account of multiple anti-nuclear frames. Likewise, environmental degradation as a security threat is a specific image that can be framed in different ways (for example as environmental conflict or environmental security, see below). In that sense, the treatment of environmental security in the Copenhagen School has been too abstract and has negated the different ways in which the environment is framed in a security image. The frames may differ, for instance, in the causal mechanisms they provide for the relationship between environment and security, in the referent objects they invoke, and in the intensity of the “existential threat”, which may vary with the kind of referent object, but also with the concrete aspect of the existence of a group that is threatened (on these degrees of securitisation, see also Diez et al. 2006, 2008). They also take on diagnostic (problem identification), prognostic (articulation of proposed solution) and motivational tasks (“call to the arms” providing a rationale for engaging in action, including the construction of a motive with adequate vocabulary), which are interconnected to the extent that, for instance, diagnostic frames enable certain prognoses and lead to particular policy recommendations (Benford and Snow 2000: 615) – an observation that Hajer (1995: 6) has made in relation to acid rain, for which there exist different solutions which all depend on the framing of the problem.

Framing the climate change-conflict nexus

Reconfiguring securitising moves as an instance of framing therefore allows us to identify different kinds of securitising climate change, in which frames stick to the basic “grammar” of securitisation, but construct the threat differently, refer to different referent objects and propose different kinds of extraordinary measures. The categorisation of different frames securitizing climate change builds upon and combines several approaches discussed in the literature. Page (2010: 3) distinguishes between a shallow demilitarised view of security (climate change as threat to state security) and a deeply demilitarised notion referring to the concept of human environmental security. Detraz and Betsill (2009) focus on two distinct discourses linking climate change and security. The environmental conflict theme is concerned with violent conflict resulting from a degradation of natural resources whereas environmental security is a broader conception closely linked to the notion of human security. Trombetta (2011) refers to two tendencies in the environmental security debate, a national security discourse and a framing of environmental degradation as a threat to global order and stability.

From this literature, we deduce two ideal typical framings of the relationship between environment and security: a more specific one which postulates a relationship between environmental degradation (in our case climate change) and violent conflicts, sticking to a rather narrow conception of security, and a more general one which is concerned with the effects of environmental degradation on the everyday lives of human beings, following a broader concept of human security. We label these frames environmental conflict and environmental security respectively. As shown in the table below, these frames also differ in terms of the respective diagnostic and prognostic dimension.

To these, we add a third potential frame, which sees human beings as part of a greater whole and on this basis focuses on the environment as such as the main referent object. We call this frame ecological security. It follows the notion of complex ecology described by Cudworth and Hobden (2010) as well as Dalby (1992), both of whom focus on the ecosystem as the referent object to be secured. They emphasise the interdependence and symbiosis of different elements within a global ecological system and question the belief that a techno-institutional fix for the present problems is possible (Cudworth and Hobden 2010: 8). Bertell (2001) develops a similar idea of ecological security, prioritizing the health of the environment over other referent objects. In this analysis, the ecological security discourse tends to shift from security to risk alleviation and aims at restructuring and transforming risk-producing activities rather than securing specific groups.

Framing Discourse	Referent Object	Diagnostic Dimension	Prognostic Dimension	Related Words	Key
Environmental Security	All human beings, the individual	Everyday security implications for all human beings, focus on human vulnerability to environmental change, environment as a common good	Long term strategies to combat environmental change, rather mitigation and precautionary measures	Human security, global security, climate as a common good, human vulnerability, global governance infrastructure	
Environmental Conflict	Particular communities, including states	Focus on violent conflict when natural resources degrade, military plays central role, environment as a limited resource	Short term measures, rather adaptation and reactive (military) measures	Resource security, resource conflicts, degradation of natural resources water wars, energy security and energy diversification, military responses	
Ecological Security	The environment or ecosystem as a whole	Embeddedness of human beings in global ecosystem, threat to the environment as such, including plants and animals, environment as a good in its own right	Move from security to risk alleviation, restructuring of risk creating activities rather than attempts to secure specific groups via mitigation or adaptation	Ecosystem, limits of growth, human-nature relations, interdependence, symbiosis, risk	

Securitising actors

Wæver (1995: 57) suggests that security is articulated predominantly by elites. According to Buzan et al. (1998: 40-42) the most significant securitising actors tend to be ‘policy entrepreneurs’. Since the realm of security is often strongly institutionalised, it privileges the government and special security institutions. Not only the securitisation approach, but also the concept of framing suffers from an over-emphasis on the political elites in a narrow sense (Benford 1997: 409).

Contrary to the usual emphasis on securitising moves performed by political elites, this project will focus on securitising moves by non-state actors (NGOs and think tanks). Buzan et al. (1998: 31-32) acknowledge that the dominance of state elites in performing securitising moves is neither static nor

absolute. Securitisations of the environment are also articulated by NGOs and think tanks (Brzoska 2009), often before they are taken up by the mainstream political debate. In the case of the ozone regime it was shown that the main securitising actors were NGOs and environmental groups that tried to mobilise states to act collectively (Trombetta 2011). Thus, we assume that it is predominantly non-state actors that attempt to securitise climate change, not least as an attempt to mobilise resources and gain attention (Detraz and Betsill 2009, Dalby 1992, Nordås and Gleditsch 2009). Non-state actors will therefore be the starting point of our analysis, while we remain open for the possibility that the main securitising actors are located within the government or opposition.

Accounting for different securitising frames

There are broadly speaking two general explanations of why actors pursue particular securitising frames. These align with the norms vs. interests divide and the distinction between different logics of action in the social sciences. Litfin (1994), in her study on Ozone discourse, calls them “specific interest” and “pre-existing discourses”. The latter explanation relates particular securitising frames back to broader cognitive frames or “metanarratives”. Such an explanation can be grounded in a variety of approaches that emphasise the role of norms, ideas and discourses, including cognitive mapping (e.g. Axelrod 1976), ideational research (e.g. Goldstein and Keohane 1993) or discourse analysis (e.g. Wæver 2002). They all would argue that there are broader discourses that enable particular arguments to be put forward in the sense that they provide a context of meaning that makes such arguments possible. Thus, securitising frames would have to be consistent with broader assumptions and worldviews held by the securitising actors. In turn, these “metanarratives” provide both substantive and procedural backgrounds, i.e. they may not only provide a set of core elements of worldviews and their interconnection (e.g., are they causally linked and in which direction does causality flow?), but also a sense of how it is possible to have an impact on this world. The alternative explanation would see material interests at work in a particular securitising frame (for instance see Hajer’s [1995: 13] discussion on the particular interpretation of the image or what he calls story line rain forest according to the respective actors’ interests). In other words, the specific way of securitising climate change may depend on underlying interests in, for instance, promoting a particular instrument to tackle climate change or strengthening a specific political or societal position.

The empirical problem with these arguments is that they are related to different ontologies, i.e. assumptions about how actors “work” which cannot be directly observed unless there are strong inconsistencies in behaviour, which we do not expect to be able to find in the case of securitising climate change. Furthermore, both consequentialism (following one’s interests) and appropriateness (acting according to norms) may play a role simultaneously. Rather than determining directly whether it was norms or interests that led to a particular securitising frame, therefore, we pursue a two-pronged strategy that (a) determines how securitising moves are themselves introduced (i.e. to what extent are they linked to interest-based arguments, and to what extent are they consistent with the broader cognitive frames), and (b) tries to reconstruct the way in which securitising moves have found their way into policy-documents (i.e. who were the crucial forces and what were the core events that led to the development of a particular document). This will not allow us to settle the norms/interest divide in the sense of determining motivations of actors, but we can see if other actors had an influence on non-state actors’ decision to carry out particular securitising moves, assuming that these moves are hence performed in the interest of these actors. It will also allow us

to assess whether securitising actors see themselves as acting on behalf of particular interests, both in their rhetoric and in their own narrative of the background of a particular securitising move.

Furthermore, it may be that discursive frames are applied according to specific contexts. In particular, the context of specific national debates may have an impact on securitising moves in terms of political style, basic political understandings, and specific interests. Likewise, it may be that particular ideological traditions are prone to the use of particular securitising frames.

Explaining the success of particular frames

The Copenhagen School defines securitization as a successful speech act ‘through which an intersubjective understanding is constructed within a political community to treat something as an existential threat to a valued referent object, and to enable a call for urgent and exceptional measures to deal with the threat’ (Buzan and Wæver, 2003: 491; our emphasis). Thus, our explanation of the success of a particular frame draws on the analysis of whether and how such a move has an effect on concrete policy (Vuori 2008). More precisely, we will look at the degree to which the recommendations, concepts, reports and definitions developed by the securitizing actors influenced the political decision-making process, for instance by citation, reference to a particular concept or an idea more generally. Hence, we define success in terms of policy relevance. This relevance however can take various forms. It can (a) establish a particular construction of climate change on the political agenda (agenda-setting), (b) suggest particular policy alternatives, (c) create an “emergency” situation in which political alternatives are crowded out (securitisation in the definition of the Copenhagen School) or (d), as a subset of (c), move the issue of environmental security into the field of military security (securitisation as used by Brzoska (2009), but better labelled as “militarisation”). In a first step, we therefore need to “forward-trace” the fate of particular securitising moves and check the extent to which they were taken up by governments in their policies, and to what extent they were agreed by other political parties in opposition.

We then need to look for possible explanations for this success. The literature on the success of securitising moves and its facilitating conditions (Stritzel 2007, Balzacq 2005, Buzan et al. 1998) suggests three crucial factors that can also be found in the wider literature in policy success and failure:

- Consistency of the argument, meaning that the speech act itself (or more general the “threat text” as Stritzel (2007: 374) calls it) must be in accordance with the grammar of security (see also Balzacq 2005: 179). For our purposes, we may therefore expect securitising moves to be more successful as they stick to a particular securitising frame, as this would make for the most consistent argument and not allow room for alternative representations (H1).

- “Goodness of fit” means that the articulated securitising move must resonate with existing discourses. Balzacq (2005: 171) emphasises that effective securitisation is audience-centred, pointing to its interactive dimension. This is both reflected in the position of the securitising actor vis-à-vis the audience and the “goodness of fit” argument, referring to the extent to which a securitising move resonates with the audiences experiences and beliefs. In that context, the role of narratives of history, culture and identity (McDonald 2008) is also underlined. Accordingly, we would expect that the greater the overlap between the

securitising frame used and the generally prevailing worldview, the greater the chances of a successful securitisation (H2).

- The position of the securitising actor vis-à-vis the audience that he is trying to convince. As outlined above, the Copenhagen School assumes that in the strongly institutionalised field of security the political elite is privileged to speak security (Buzan et al. 1998). In contrast, Balzacq (2005: 179) differentiates between the formal powers of a securitising actor on the one hand - it is easier for state officials to securitise an issue – and their image as knowing the issue and being trustworthy on the other hand. On this basis, we would expect the success of a securitising move to be dependent on the specific profile of a securitising actor within a society, both relating to the organisation on whose behalf the actor speaks, and to the standing of the actors themselves (H3).

A fourth condition can be added following the discussion of the Paris School conceptualisation of securitisation and our reading of this as an issue of feasibility (see p. 4) Accordingly, the success of a securitising move may depend on its perceived feasibility in terms of (a) technological possibilities, (b) fitting administrative practices and (c) expected cost (H4). While the Copenhagen School downplays such factors by stressing the emergency character of measures countering security threats, which overrides any such concerns, we would argue that this is only a characteristic of the debate once securitisation has been successful. However, it seems reasonable to assume that securitising moves are easier to accept if the cost is relatively low and there is a measure that is readily available to combat the alleged security threat.

Methodology

Case studies

In order to see whether national contexts make a difference for the securitising frames suggested and their success, the project will compare the discourses in four different countries, namely Germany, the US, Mexico and Turkey. We have chosen these because of their stance on the Kyoto Protocol as an embodiment of concrete international climate policy commitments on the one hand and their degree of (economic) development on the other. Firstly, this addresses the concern raised in the literature that work on securitisation of the environment often excludes the Global South (e.g. Dalby 1999, Leboeuf and Broughton 2008: 9). Secondly, this allows us to see whether securitising climate change works differently in countries that are seen as environmental forerunners and such that are considered laggards. It is important however to note that the stance on the Kyoto protocol is a selective device. We do not argue that this necessarily implies an observable difference in securitisation outcomes, although the ratification of Kyoto is certainly one possible policy move in order to respond to securitisation.

	Industrialised country	Emerging economy
Kyoto Protocol Laggard	US	Turkey
Kyoto Protocol Vanguard	Germany	Mexico

The **US** has not ratified the Kyoto Protocol. The Bush Administration has repeatedly pointed to the scientific uncertainty regarding the anthropogenic responsibility for climate change (Harrison 2007: 104). The climate change policy of the Bush administration was characterised by scepticism about

emission reductions and its effect on the economy (White House Press Office 2002). Accordingly, the Bush administration rejected the Kyoto Protocol with its binding reduction targets as well as the lack of similar responsibilities for the emerging economies, and already declared in 2001 that the US did not plan to implement the Protocol (Eckersley 2007). Rhetorically, the Obama administration changed the US position dramatically, acknowledging the scientific proof of man-made climate change and emphasising the economic potential of renewable energies (White House Press Office 2008). However, a proposal for national climate legislation, the American Clean Energy and Security Act, failed in the Congress and significantly weakened the administration’s position before the UN climate conference in Copenhagen. Moreover, the US has not ratified the Kyoto Protocol despite the newly self-ascribed leadership role.

Germany is generally praised for its proactive stance in international climate negotiations. During the first Conference of Parties (COP-1) in Berlin, Germany and other EU member states were said to have paved the way for the Berlin mandate, which created a working group tasked with the drafting of a legally binding protocol including emission reduction targets within a specified time frame (Oberthür and Ott 1999). In 2002 Germany was the first major industrialised country that formally began with the procedure to ratify the Kyoto Protocol (BBC News 2002). The two chambers voted to make it part of national law in April 2002 unanimously in accordance with the EU environmental ministers’ decision to ratify the Protocol until August of that year.

In **Turkey**, the climate change conflict nexus is often addressed in relation to development concerns (Adem 2011) and energy security issues (Demirba 2003, Balat 2010). After initial intentions to sign the Kyoto Protocol, Turkey postponed its signature for over a decade with reference to its concerns regarding impediments to economic development. When Turkey finally acceded to the Kyoto Protocol in 2008, this was mainly attributed to pressure from the EU and the aim to be involved in shaping the post-2012 climate change regime, albeit not necessarily in terms of a more ambitious stance (Today’s Zaman Online 2008). In relation to the ratification Greenpeace activist Hilal Atıcı criticised: ‘Turkey has always been too late in being part of international efforts to combat climate change’ (Today’s Zaman Online 2008).

The case of **Mexico** illustrates that a large emerging economy, which additionally depends on revenues from oil exports, can nevertheless implement ambitious climate protection efforts. Mexico is generally praised for a proactive stance in the climate change negotiations, including an early signature and ratification of the Kyoto Protocol (Chandler et al. 2002). The Kyoto Protocol was opened for signatures in March 1998 and Mexico was one of the first countries to sign it on 9 June 1998. Mexico’s Congress ratified the Kyoto Protocol in April 2000 unanimously, remarkable two years earlier than South Africa with its comparable economic structure and presence of environmental NGOs (Fredriksson et al. 2007: 232). In terms of implementation, Mexico actively participated in the preparation of National Communications as a part of the responsibilities under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Mexico was the first country which presented a Second National Communication to the UNFCCC in 2002, and was the first non-Annex 1 country to present its third National Communication four years later.

	USA	Germany	Mexico	Turkey
Kyoto Signature	12 November 1998	29 April 1998	9 June 1998	Not signed
Kyoto Ratification	Not ratified	31 May 2002	7 September 2000	28 May 2009

Per Capita Income (2010 estimates)	\$ 47 200	\$ 35 700	\$ 12 900	\$ 12 300
Human Development Index	Rank 4 (0.902)	Rank 10 (0.885)	Rank 56 (0.750)	Rank 83 (0.679)
Bertelsmann Transformations Index	-	-	Rank 33 (7.09) Political: 6.93 Economic: 7.25	Rank 20 (7.54) Political: 7.65 Economic: 7.43
CO2 Emissions per Capita 1998 (Tons of Carbon Per Year)	20.35	10,63	1.1	0.9

Sources: CIA Factbook, UNDP, PWE, US Energy Information Administration